

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A spread illuminating ~~apparatus according to claim 2,~~
apparatus, comprising:

a transparent substrate made of a light-transmissible material and having a
light reflection pattern having a number of ridges formed on at least one surface thereof; and

a bar-like light source disposed close to an end surface of the transparent
substrate,

wherein a cover formed of a light-transmissible material is integrally provided
over the one surface of the transparent substrate sandwiching a cushioning material
comprising a light-transmissible substance in such a manner that the number of ridges are
directly covered with the cushioning material, the cushioning material is of a substance with
low refractive index, and ~~wherein~~ the substance is gel.

4. (Currently Amended) A spread illuminating ~~apparatus according to claim 2,~~
apparatus, comprising:

a transparent substrate made of a light-transmissible material and having a
light reflection pattern having a number of ridges formed on at least one surface thereof; and

a bar-like light source disposed close to an end surface of the transparent
substrate,

wherein a cover formed of a light-transmissible material is integrally provided
over the one surface of the transparent substrate sandwiching a cushioning material
comprising a light-transmissible substance in such a manner that the number of ridges are

directly covered with the cushioning material, the cushioning material is of a substance with low refractive index and ~~wherein~~ the substance is liquid.

5. (Currently Amended) A spread illuminating ~~apparatus according to claim 1,~~ apparatus, comprising:

a transparent substrate made of a light-transmissible material and having a light reflection pattern having a number of ridges formed on at least one surface thereof; and
a bar-like light source disposed close to an end surface of the transparent substrate,

wherein a cover formed of a light-transmissible material is integrally provided over the one surface of the transparent substrate sandwiching a cushioning material comprising a light-transmissible substance in such a manner that the number of ridges are directly covered with the cushioning material and ~~wherein~~ the cushioning material is of a gaseous substance.

6. (Currently Amended) A spread illuminating ~~apparatus according to claim 1,~~ apparatus, comprising:

a transparent substrate made of a light-transmissible material and having a light reflection pattern having a number of ridges formed on at least one surface thereof; and
a bar-like light source disposed close to an end surface of the transparent substrate,

wherein a cover formed of a light-transmissible material is integrally provided over the one surface of the transparent substrate sandwiching a cushioning material comprising a light-transmissible substance in such a manner that the number of ridges are directly covered with the cushioning material, ~~wherein~~ a thin film of a substance with low refractive index is formed on the light reflection pattern of the transparent substrate, and the cushioning material is of a gel substance.

7. (Currently Amended) A spread illuminating ~~apparatus according to claim 1,~~
apparatus, comprising:

a transparent substrate made of a light-transmissible material and having a
light reflection pattern having a number of ridges formed on at least one surface thereof; and
a bar-like light source disposed close to an end surface of the transparent
substrate,

wherein a cover formed of a light-transmissible material is integrally provided
over the one surface of the transparent substrate sandwiching a cushioning material
comprising a light-transmissible substance in such a manner that the number of ridges are
directly covered with the cushioning material, ~~wherein~~ a thin film of a substance with low
refractive index is formed on the light reflection pattern of the transparent substrate, and the
cushioning material is of a liquid substance.

8. (Currently Amended) A spread illuminating ~~apparatus according to claim~~
~~1,~~apparatus, comprising:

a transparent substrate made of a light-transmissible material and having a
light reflection pattern having a number of ridges formed on at least one surface thereof; and
a bar-like light source disposed close to an end surface of the transparent
substrate,

wherein a cover formed of a light-transmissible material is integrally provided
over the one surface of the transparent substrate sandwiching a cushioning material
comprising a light-transmissible substance in such a manner that the number of ridges are
directly covered with the cushioning material, ~~wherein~~ a thin film of a substance with low
refractive index is formed on the light reflection pattern of the transparent substrate, and the
cushioning material is of a gaseous substance.

9. (Currently Amended) A spread illuminating ~~apparatus according to claim 1,~~
apparatus, comprising:

a transparent substrate made of a light-transmissible material and having a
light reflection pattern having a number of ridges formed on at least one surface thereof; and
a bar-like light source disposed close to an end surface of the transparent
substrate,

wherein a cover formed of a light-transmissible material is integrally provided
over the one surface of the transparent substrate sandwiching a cushioning material
comprising a light-transmissible substance in such a manner that the number of ridges are
directly covered with the cushioning material, and ~~wherein~~ the cushioning material
comprises a plurality of transparent elastic members.

10-13. (Canceled)